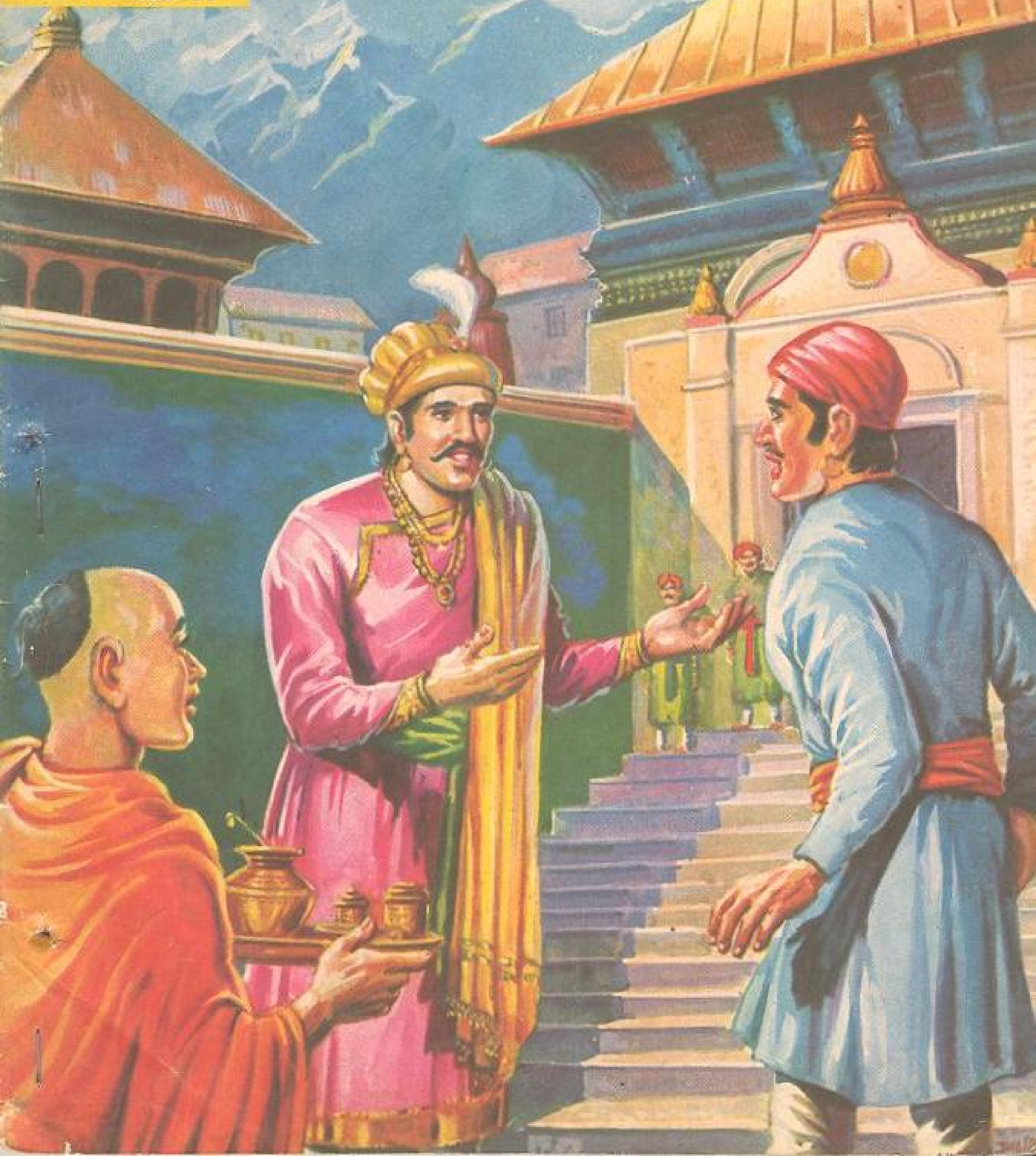
AMAR CHITRA KATHA

No. 315 Rs.

THE GOLDEN SAND

A TALE FROM NEPAL



Amar Chitra Katha
No. 315, August 1, 1984

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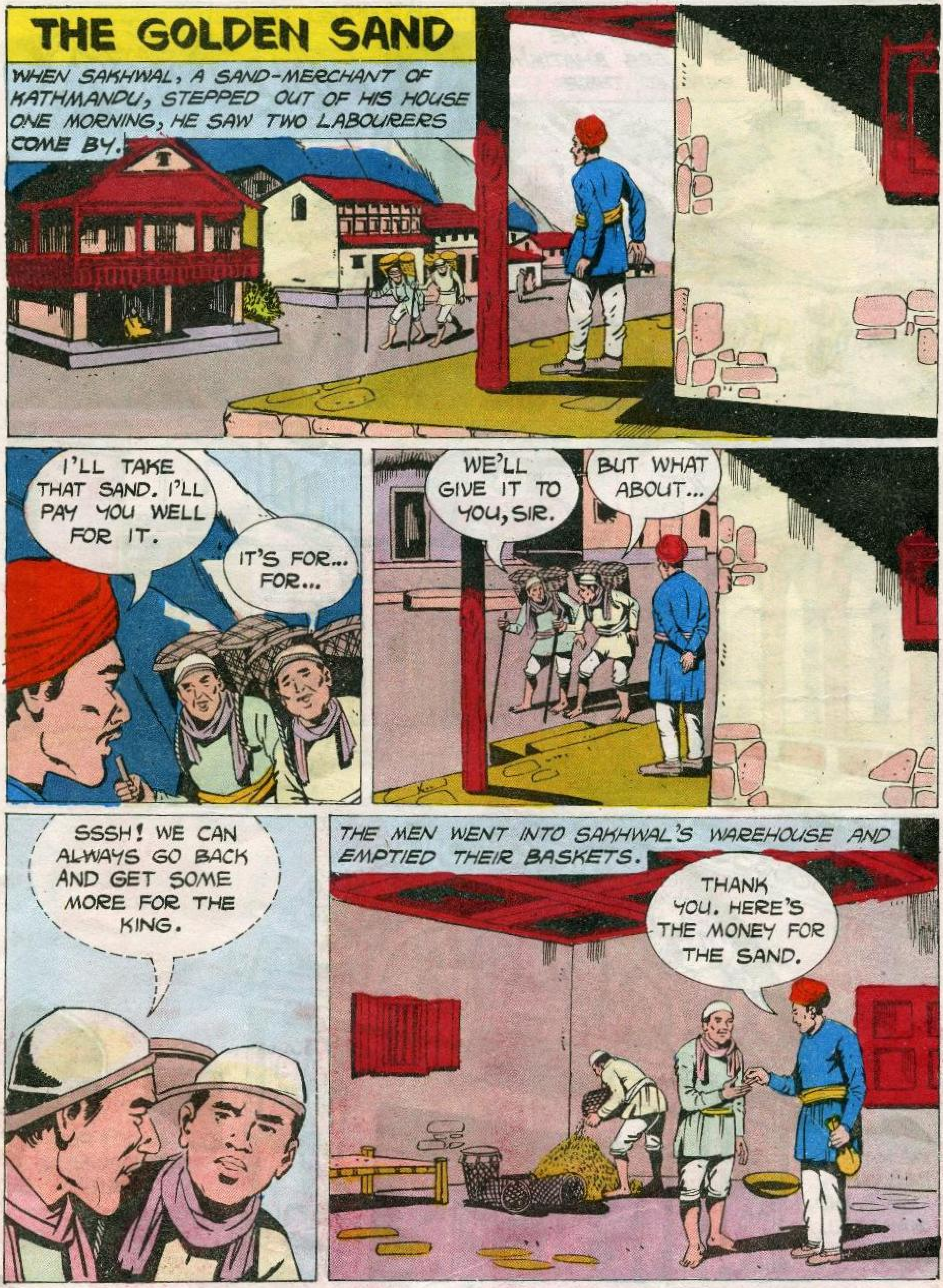
THE GOLDEN SAND
and
THE MOTHER

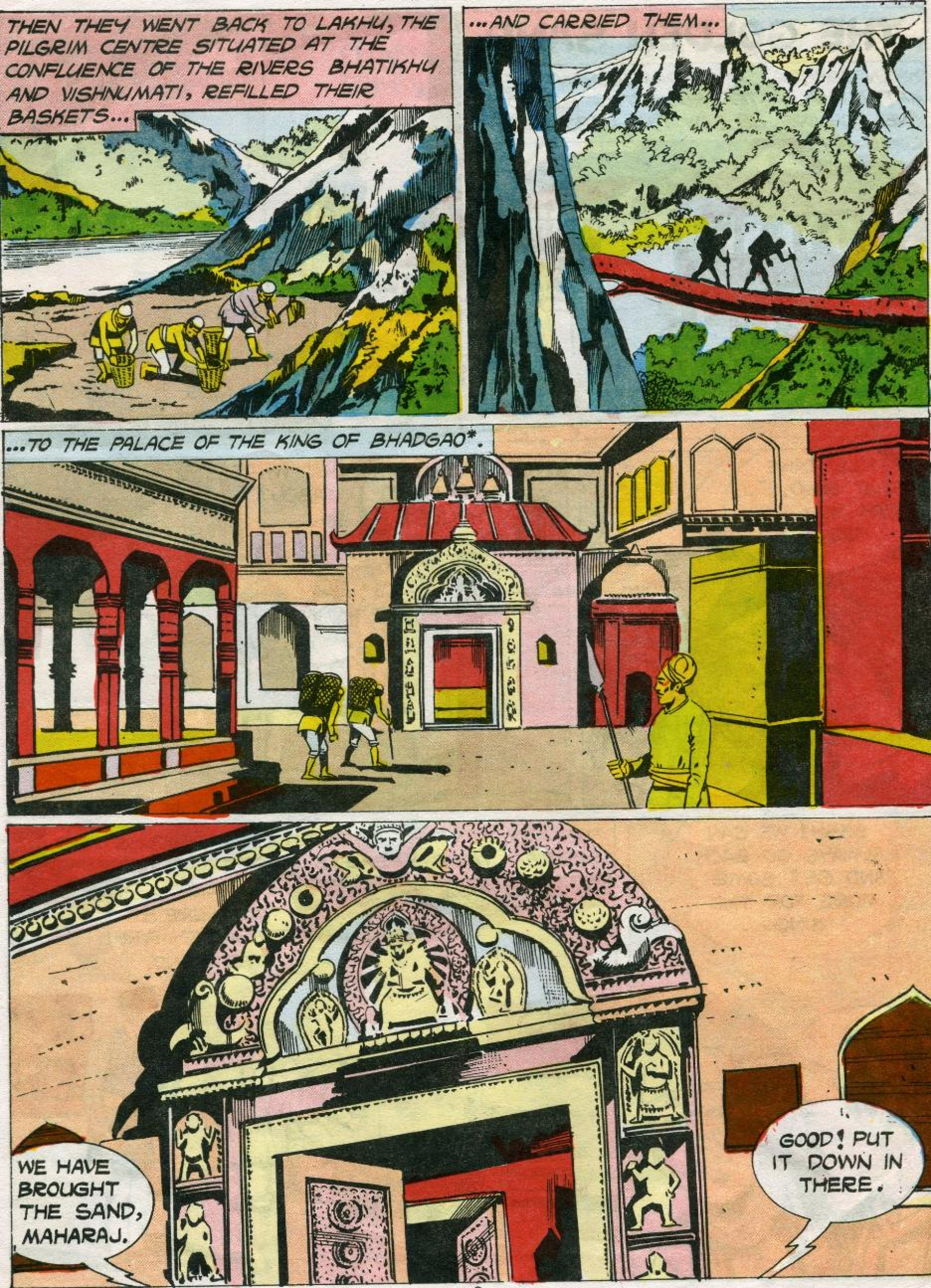
Nepal is an independent Hindu kingdom with social and cultural traditions that are not different from our own.



The temple of Pashupatinatha (Shiva) at Kathmandu is an important Hindu pilgrim centre.

In this Chitra Katha we bring you two popular legends of Nepal.


THE GOLDEN SAND
WHEN SAKHWAL, A SAND-MERCHANT OF KATHMANDU, STEPPED OUT OF HIS HOUSE ONE MORNING, HE SAW TWO LABOURERS COME BY.
I'LL TAKE THAT SAND. I'LL PAY YOU WELL FOR IT.
IT'S FOR... FOR...
WE'LL GIVE IT TO YOU, SIR.
BUT WHAT ABOUT...
SSSH! WE CAN ALWAYS GO BACK AND GET SOME MORE FOR THE KING.
THE MEN WENT INTO SAKHWAL'S WAREHOUSE AND EMPTIED THEIR BASKETS.
THANK YOU. HERE'S THE MONEY FOR THE SAND.


THEN THEY WENT BACK TO LAKHU, THE PILGRIM CENTRE SITUATED AT THE CONFLUENCE OF THE RIVERS BHATIKHU AND VISHNUMATI, REFILLED THEIR BASKETS...
...AND CARRIED THEM...
...TO THE PALACE OF THE KING OF BHADGAO*.
WE HAVE BROUGHT THE SAND, MAHARAJ.
GOOD! PUT IT DOWN IN THERE.


A FEW HOURS LATER—
NO!
IT IS STILL SAND! MERE SAND!
THE KING EXAMINED THE CONTENTS OF ALL THE BASKETS.
HUMPH! NOTHING BUT SAND.
HE SENT FOR THE COURT ASTROLOGER.
YOU CLAIMED THAT THE SAND OF LAKHU COLLECTED AT A CERTAIN AUSPICIOUS MOMENT WOULD TURN INTO GOLD AFTER TWELVE HOURS.
IS THIS YOUR GOLD?
WHAT COULD HAVE GONE WRONG? I WAS SO SURE...


MEANWHILE, AT SAKHWAL'S WAREHOUSE—
WHY IS THE SAND SHINING SO?
WH... WHAT'S THIS? OH! OH! WONDER OF WONDERS!
IT'S GOLD DUST!
I'D BETTER PUT IT AWAY IN A BIN.
BUT THAT NIGHT SAKHWAL WAS RACKED BY DOUBTS.
IT'S TRUE I FOUND IT IN MY WAREHOUSE... BUT DOES THAT MAKE IT MINE? SHOULD I KEEP IT OR SHOULD I... OH, WELL, I'LL SLEEP OVER IT AND THEN DECIDE.


THE NEXT MORNING HE SET OUT OF HIS HOUSE.
HE WAS WALKING THROUGH THE MARKET-PLACE, STILL STRUGGLING WITH HIS PROBLEM...
...WHEN A VOICE BEHIND HIM BROKE INTO HIS THOUGHTS.
MERCY! MERCY, SAHUJI.
SAKHWAL SLOWLY TURNED ROUND.
PLEASE DON'T TAKE AWAY MY LAND AND MY CATTLE, SAHUJI. I'LL BE RUINED!
GRANT ME SOME MORE TIME! PLEASE! I PROMISE I'LL PAY EVERY SINGLE COIN!
SO HAD YOU PROMISED— LAST MONTH, AND THE MONTH BEFORE!

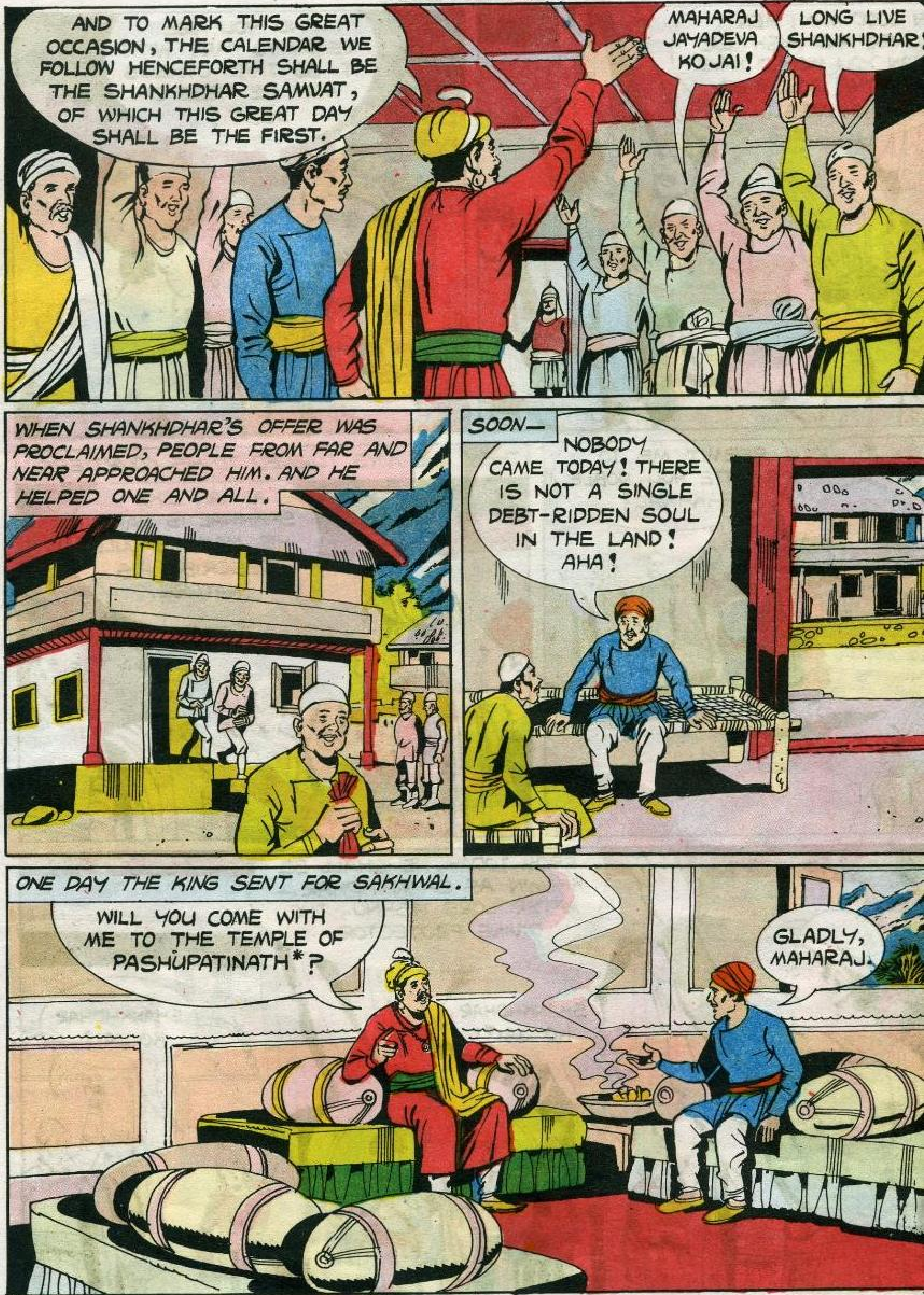

NO, I CAN'T WAIT ANY MORE! PAY NOW OR ELSE I'LL...
SAKHWAL IMAGINED HIMSELF IN THE OLD MAN'S PLIGHT.
AND HE KNEW WHAT HE MUST DO.
HERE! TAKE THIS AND GIVE HIM BACK HIS BOND.
YOU...!
YOU... LOW-BORN...
I MAY BE LOW-BORN, I MAY BE IMPURE...
...BUT MY GOLD IS NEITHER. SO TAKE IT!


THE MONEY-LENDER ACCEPTED THE GOLD AND RETURNED THE BOND TO THE POOR CREDITOR.
MAY GOD BLESS... HE'S GONE!
BAPUJI...
BUT SAKHWAL WAS ALREADY OUT OF EARSHOT.
THE SCENE HE HAD JUST WITNESSED SET HIM THINKING.
THERE MUST BE HUNDREDS LIKE HIM...
...WHO ARE CAUGHT IN THE CLUTCHES OF MERCILESS MONEY-LENDERS... HM-M-M...


HE WENT STRAIGHT TO THE COURT OF KING JAYADEVA MALLA.
SALUTATIONS, MAHARAJ!
I HAVE SOMETHING TO TELL YOU, MAHARAJ.
YES? GO AHEAD.
WELL... ER... I... I BOUGHT SOME SAND YESTERDAY. AND NEARLY TWELVE HOURS LATER...
WHEN HE FINISHED HIS TALE—
MAHARAJ, I WANT TO USE THE GOLD TO FREE ALL THOSE WHO ARE UNFORTUNATE ENOUGH TO BE IN THE CLUTCHES OF MONEY-LENDERS.
DO I HAVE YOUR PERMISSION, MAHARAJ? AND YOUR BLESSINGS?
BLESSINGS? PERMISSION?



*NEPALI EQUIVALENT OF 'KI JAI'


AND TO MARK THIS GREAT OCCASION, THE CALENDAR WE FOLLOW HENCEFORTH SHALL BE THE SHANKHDHAR SAMVAT, OF WHICH THIS GREAT DAY SHALL BE THE FIRST.
MAHARAJ JAYADEVA KO JAI!
LONG LIVE SHANKHDHAR!
WHEN SHANKHDHAR'S OFFER WAS PROCLAIMED, PEOPLE FROM FAR AND NEAR APPROACHED HIM. AND HE HELPED ONE AND ALL.
SOON—
NOBODY CAME TODAY! THERE IS NOT A SINGLE DEBT-RIDDEN SOUL IN THE LAND! AHA!
ONE DAY THE KING SENT FOR SAKHWAL.
WILL YOU COME WITH ME TO THE TEMPLE OF PASHUPATINATH*?
GLADLY, MAHARAJ.

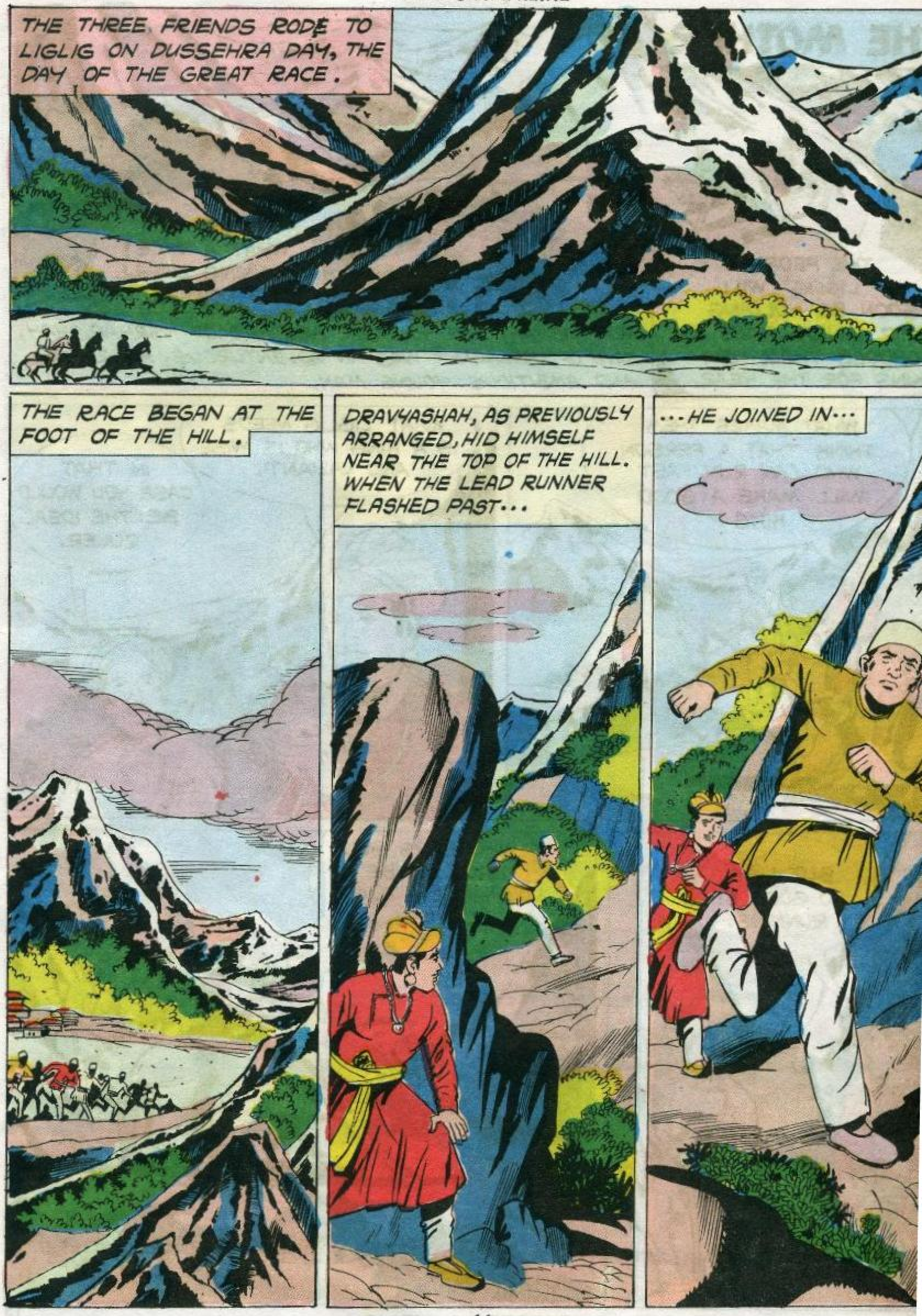
* SHIVA


WHEN THEY ARRIVED AT THE ENTRANCE—
COME IN, SHANKHDHAR.
B...BUT... MAHARAJ...
...HOW CAN I, ENTER THE SACRED TEMPLE?
PLEASE GO IN, MAHARAJ. I'LL BOW TO THE LORD FROM OUT HERE.
SHANKHDHAR!


ONE'S CASTE IS DETERMINED BY ONE'S CHARACTER AND NOT BY ONE'S BIRTH.
TODAY THERE IS NONE OF A HIGHER CASTE THAN YOU IN THE WHOLE LAND.
AMIDST GREAT CHEER, SHANKHDHAR ENTERED THE TEMPLE.
PASHUPATINATH KO JAI!
SHANKHDHAR KO JAI!
MAHARAJ JAYADEVA KO JAI!
A STATUE OF SHANKHDHAR WAS LATER INSTALLED AT T
SOUTHERN GATE OF THE TEMPLE AND THE SHANKHDHA
CALENDAR IS FOLLOWED IN NEPAL TO THIS DAY.



* A STATE IN NEPAL @ A STATE BORDERING LIGLIG

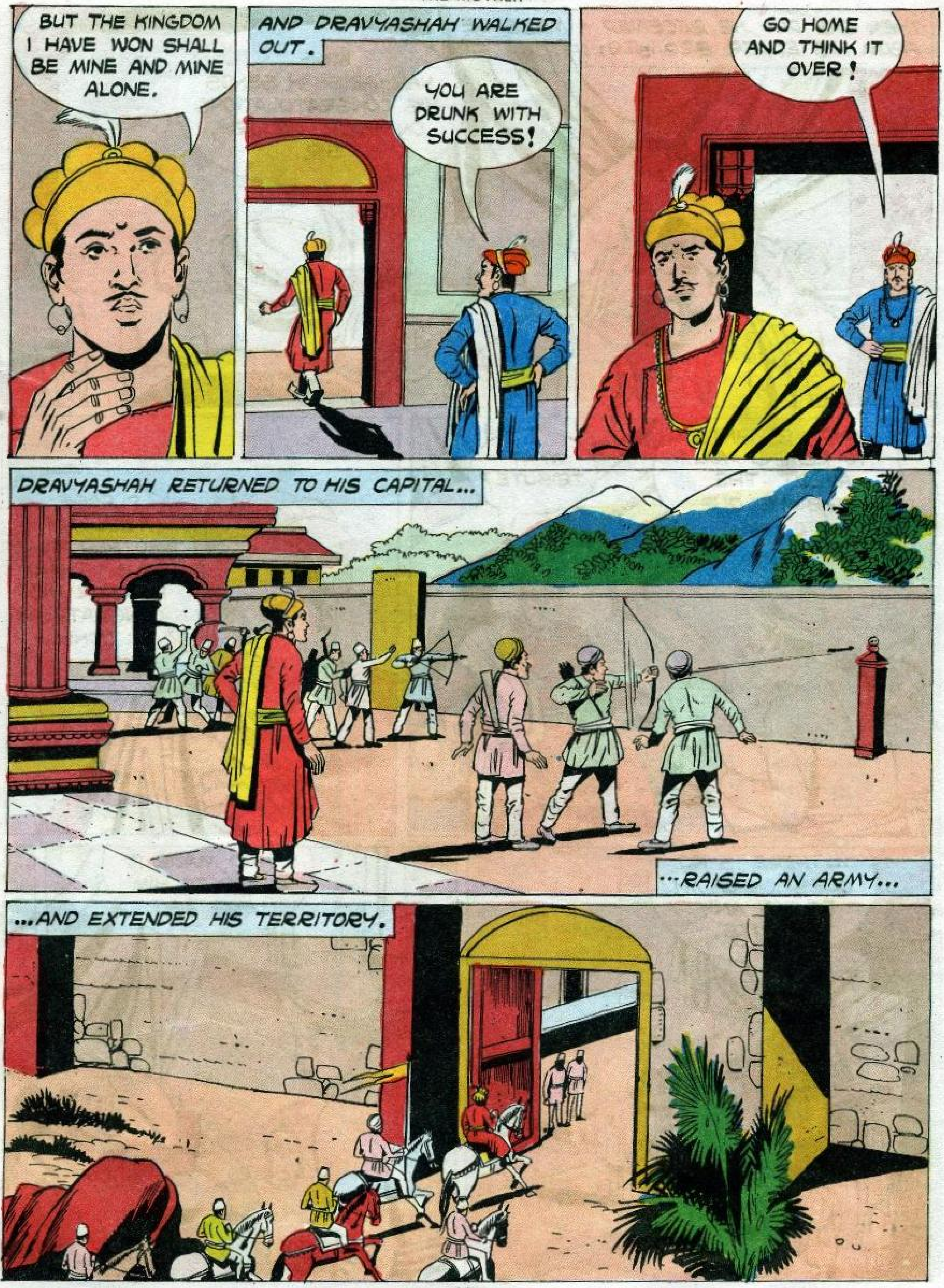

THE THREE FRIENDS RODE TO LIGLIG ON DUSSEHRA DAY, THE DAY OF THE GREAT RACE.
THE RACE BEGAN AT THE FOOT OF THE HILL.
DRAVYASHAH, AS PREVIOUSLY ARRANGED, HID HIMSELF NEAR THE TOP OF THE HILL. WHEN THE LEAD RUNNER FLASHED PAST...
...HE JOINED IN...


...OVERTOOK THE RUNNER...
...REACHED THE TEMPLE ATOP THE HILL...
...RECEIVED THE GARLAND FROM THE UNSUSPECTING PRIEST...


...AND RAN DOWNHILL...
...TO THE WAITING CROWD.
CONGRATULATIONS, YOUNG MAN! WHAT'S YOUR NAME?
DRAVYASHAH, SIR.
YOU SHALL BE OUR KING FOR THIS YEAR. RAJA DRAVYASHAH KO JAI!
RAJA DRAVYASHAH KO JAI!


DRAVYASHAH WAS TAKEN IN PROCESSION...
...TO THE PALACE...
...AND INSTALLED ON THE THRONE.
WHAT IS YOUR FIRST COMMAND, MAHARAJ ?
WELL...
...FROM NOW ON, THE CUSTOM OF SELECTING A KING EVERY YEAR SHALL BE STOPPED FORTHWITH.
UNDER ONE PERMANENT KING, LIGLIG WILL PROSPER AND FLOURISH.

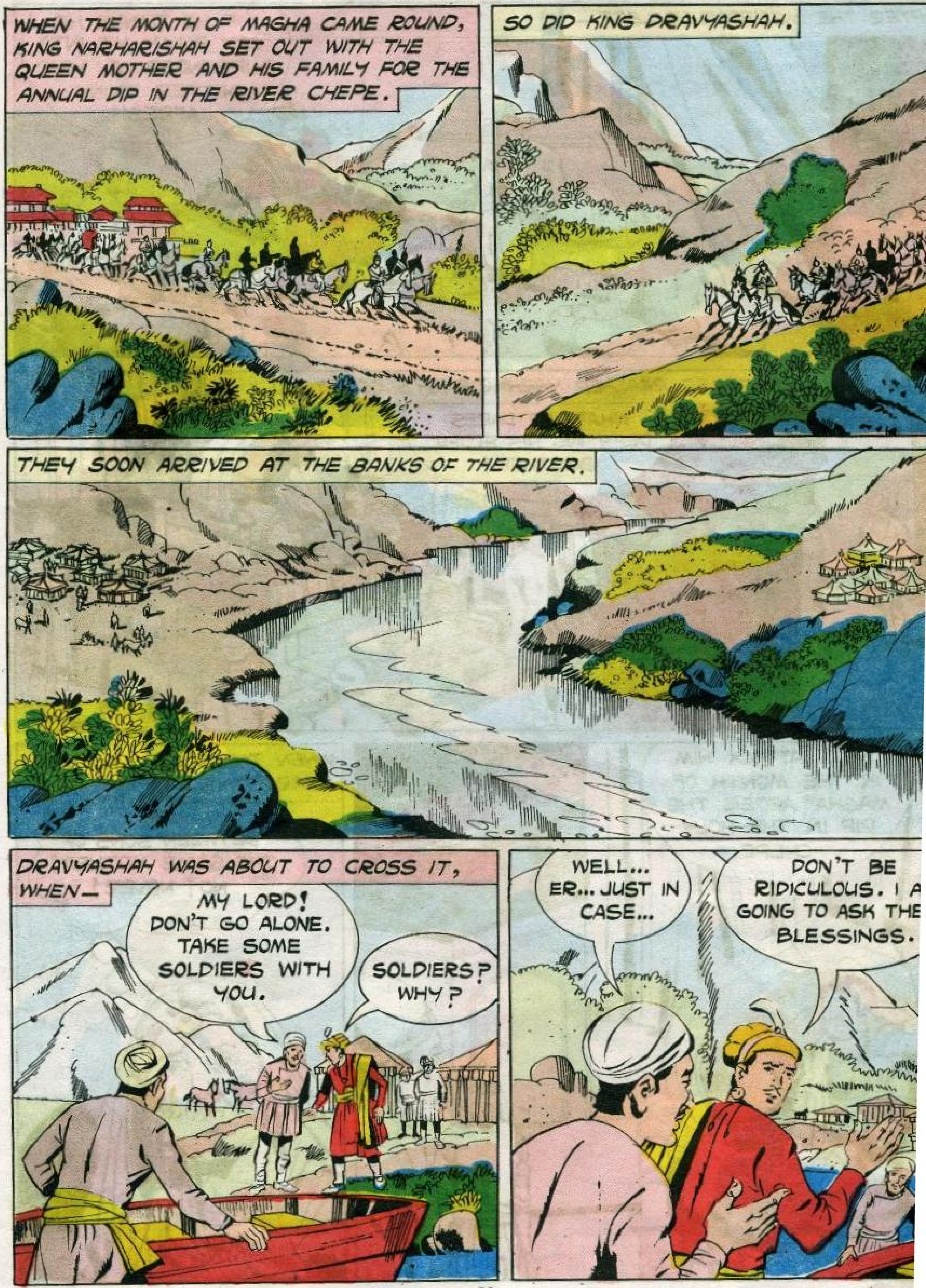

DRAVYASHAH THEN MADE A VISIT TO LAMJUNG TO MEET HIS MOTHER, BASANTVATI.
SALUTATIONS, MOTHER! WITH YOUR BLESSINGS YOUR YOUNGER SON TOO HAS BECOME A KING TODAY.
MAY GOD BLESS YOU, MY SON.
THEN HE WENT TO NARHARISHAH WHO HAD ALREADY HEARD THE NEWS.
WELL DONE, DRAVYA! YOU HAVE BROUGHT GLORY TO LAMJUNG— AND TO ME!
I, THE LORD OF LAMJUNG, WILL BE THE LORD OF LIGLIG TOO! MY TREASURY WILL NOW OVERFLOW, MY...
PARDON ME FOR INTERRUPTING YOU, BROTHER.
AS MY ELDER BROTHER, YOU ARE NO DOUBT THE MASTER OF THE KINGDOM WE INHERITED FROM OUR FATHER.

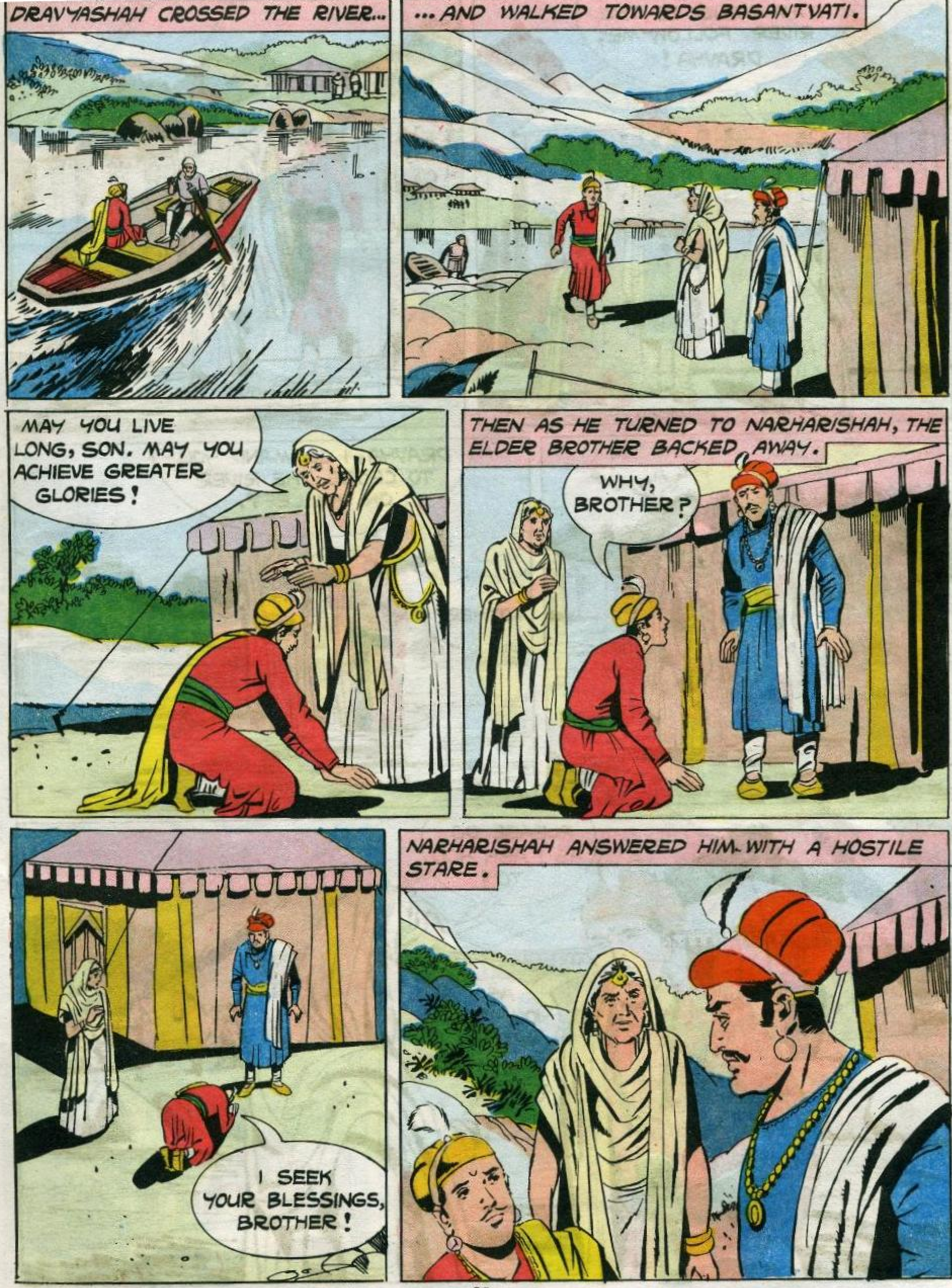

BUT THE KINGDOM I HAVE WON SHALL BE MINE AND MINE ALONE.
AND DRAVYASHAH WALKED OUT.
YOU ARE DRUNK WITH SUCCESS!
GO HOME AND THINK IT OVER!
DRAVYASHAH RETURNED TO HIS CAPITAL...
...RAISED AN ARMY...
...AND EXTENDED HIS TERRITORY.


THEN ONE DAY HE RECEIVED A MESSAGE FROM HIS ELDER BROTHER.
KING NARHARISHAH SENDS HIS CONGRATULATIONS ON YOUR VICTORY, SIR.
AND HE WANTS TO REMIND YOU ABOUT THE TRIBUTE DUE TO HIM.
WHAT TRIBUTE?
PLEASE TELL MY BROTHER TH WHILE I THAN HIM FOR HI CONGRATUL TIONS..
...THERE IS NO QUESTION OF MY PAYING ANY TRIBUTE.
I HAD MADE IT CLEAR TO HIM LONG AGO.



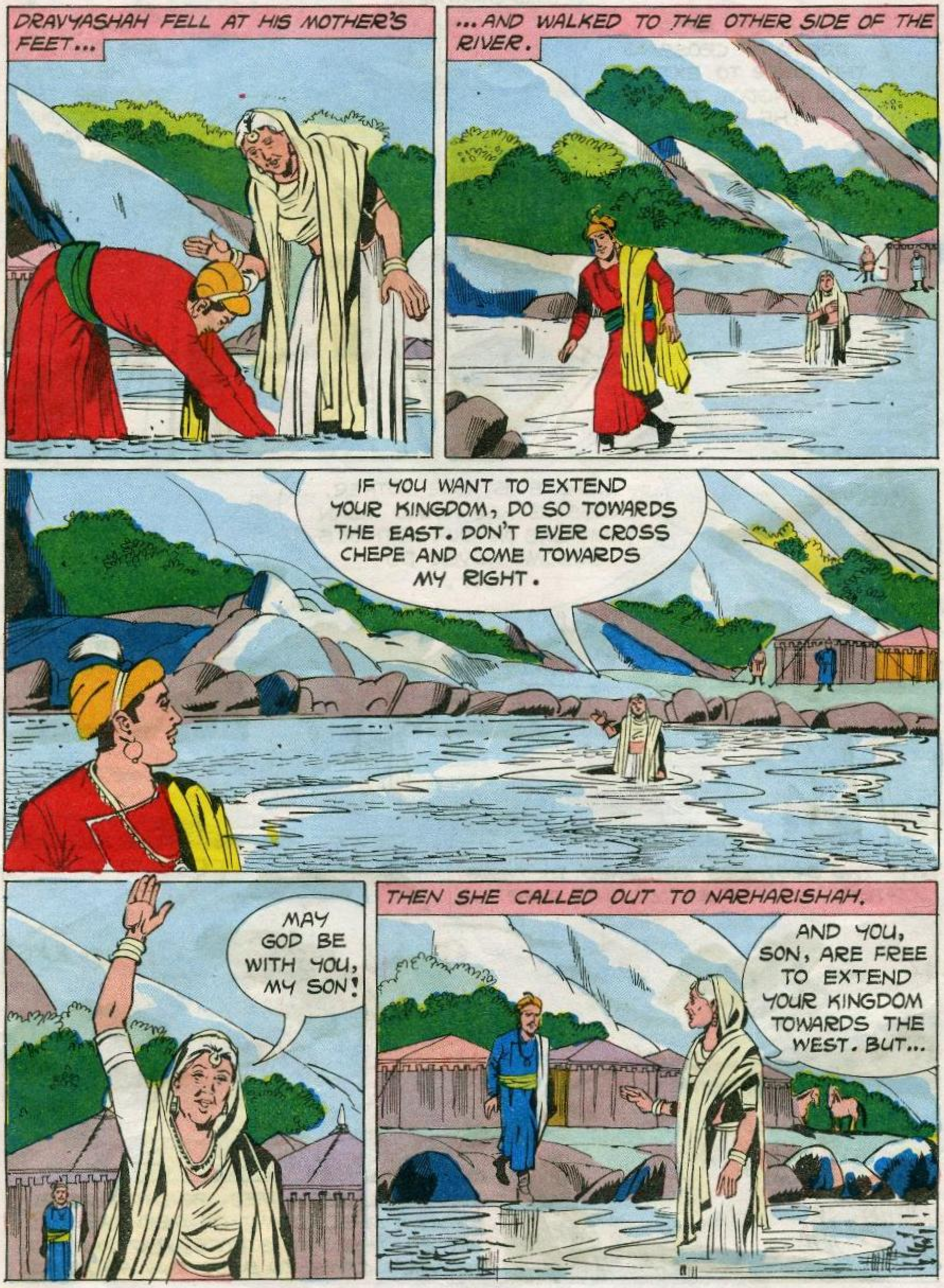
*AROUND JANUARY-FEBRUARY


WHEN THE MONTH OF MAGHA CAME ROUND, KING NARHARISHAH SET OUT WITH THE QUEEN MOTHER AND HIS FAMILY FOR THE ANNUAL DIP IN THE RIVER CHEPE.
SO DID KING DRAVYASHAH.
THEY SOON ARRIVED AT THE BANKS OF THE RIVER.
DRAVYASHAH WAS ABOUT TO CROSS IT, WHEN—
MY LORD! DON'T GO ALONE. TAKE SOME SOLDIERS WITH YOU.
SOLDIERS? WHY?
WELL... ER... JUST IN CASE...
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS. I A GOING TO ASK THE BLESSINGS.



DRAVYASHAH CROSSED THE RIVER...
...AND WALKED TOWARDS BASANTVATI.
MAY YOU LIVE LONG, SON. MAY YOU ACHIEVE GREATER GLORIES!
THEN AS HE TURNED TO NARHARISHAH, THE ELDER BROTHER BACKED AWAY.
WHY, BROTHER?
I SEEK YOUR BLESSINGS, BROTHER!
NARHARISHAH ANSWERED HIM WITH A HOSTILE STARE.

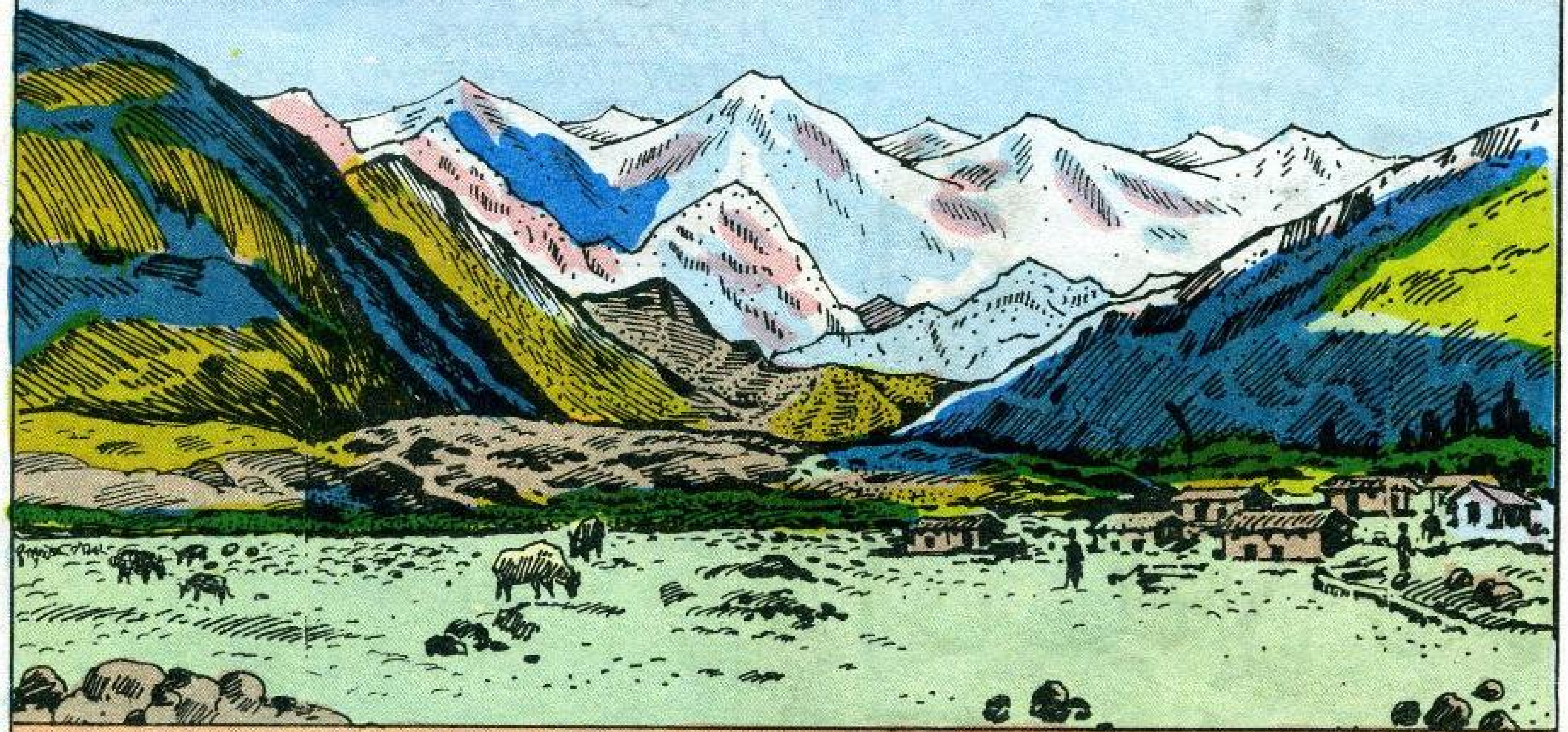

I AM GOING TO THE RIVER. FOLLOW ME, DRAVYA!
DRAVYA, I COMMAND YOU TO CROSS THE RIVER ON MY LEFT.
MOTHER!
PLEASE DO AS I ASK YOU TO!
AS YOU WISH, MOTHER.


DRAVYASHAH FELL AT HIS MOTHER'S FEET...
...AND WALKED TO THE OTHER SIDE OF THE RIVER.
IF YOU WANT TO EXTEND YOUR KINGDOM, DO SO TOWARDS THE EAST. DON'T EVER CROSS CHEPE AND COME TOWARDS MY RIGHT.
MAY GOD BE WITH YOU, MY SON!
THEN SHE CALLED OUT TO NARHARISHAH.
AND YOU, SON, ARE FREE TO EXTEND YOUR KINGDOM TOWARDS THE WEST. BUT...

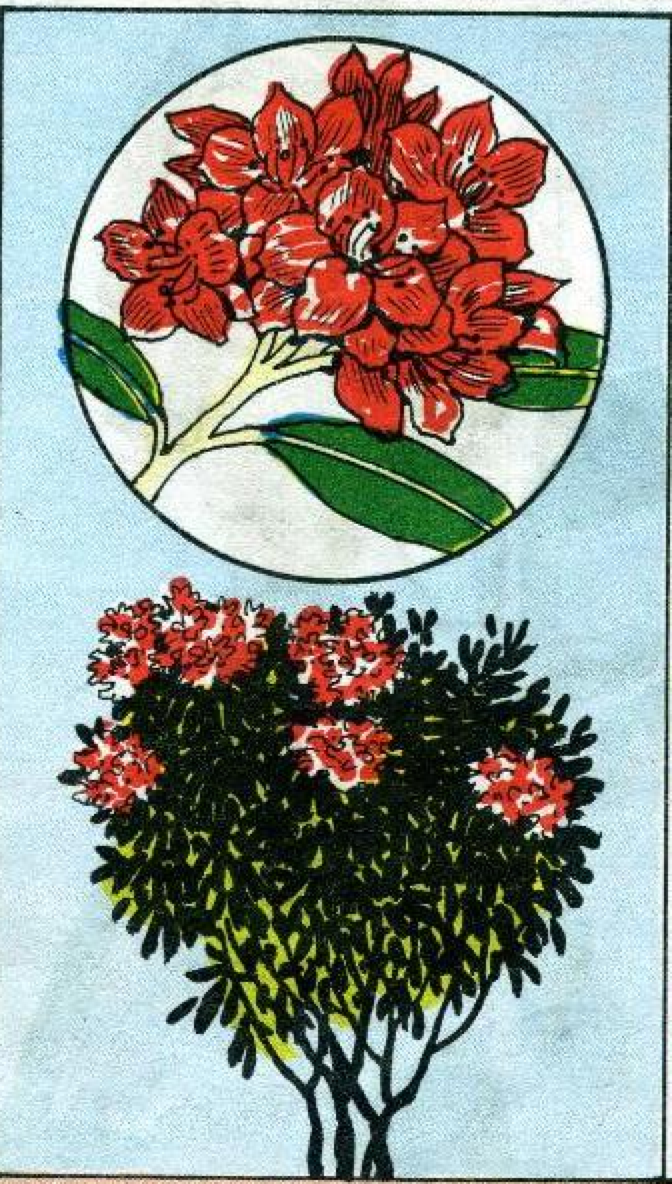

...NEVER, EVER DREAM OF CROSSING THE RIVER TO EXTEND YOUR KINGDOM TOWARDS THE EAST.
MY SONS ARE BRAVE! THEY CAN CONQUER THE WORLD. BUT REMEMBER...
...CHEPE IS YOUR MOTHER. CROSSING HER WOULD MEAN TRAMPLING ON YOUR MOTHER'S BOSOM. NEVER DO THAT.
THE TWO BROTHERS RETURNED TO THEIR STATES, AND THE BATTLE WAS AVERTED.
MANY DECADES LATER, PRITHVINARAYAN SHAH, A DESCENDANT OF DRAVYASHAH, UNITED THE TWO STATES, AND THE NE COUNTRY CAME TO BE KNOWN AS NEP

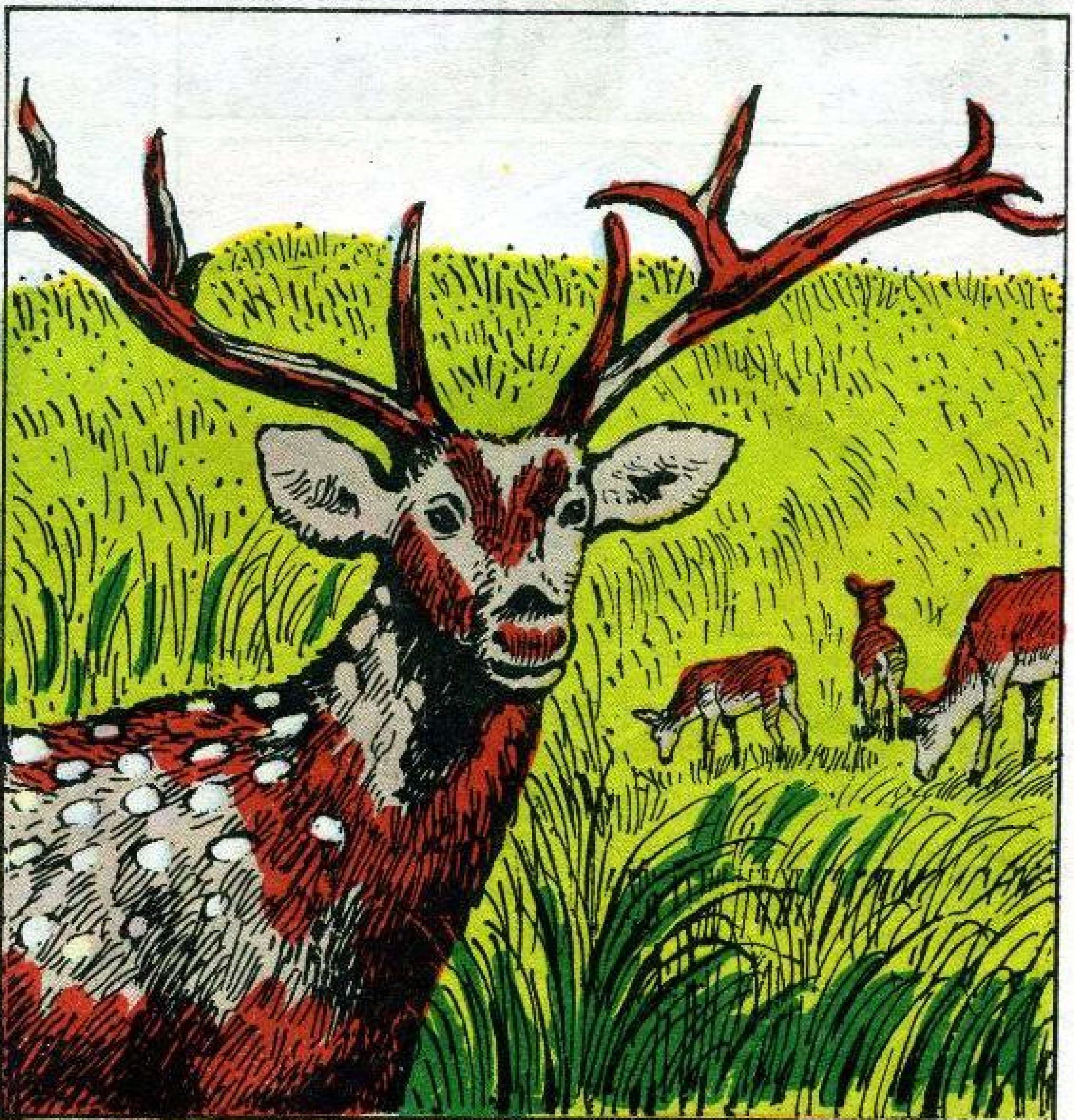
THE KINGDOM OF NEPAL

Script : Swarn Khandpur
Illustrations : S. K. Parab



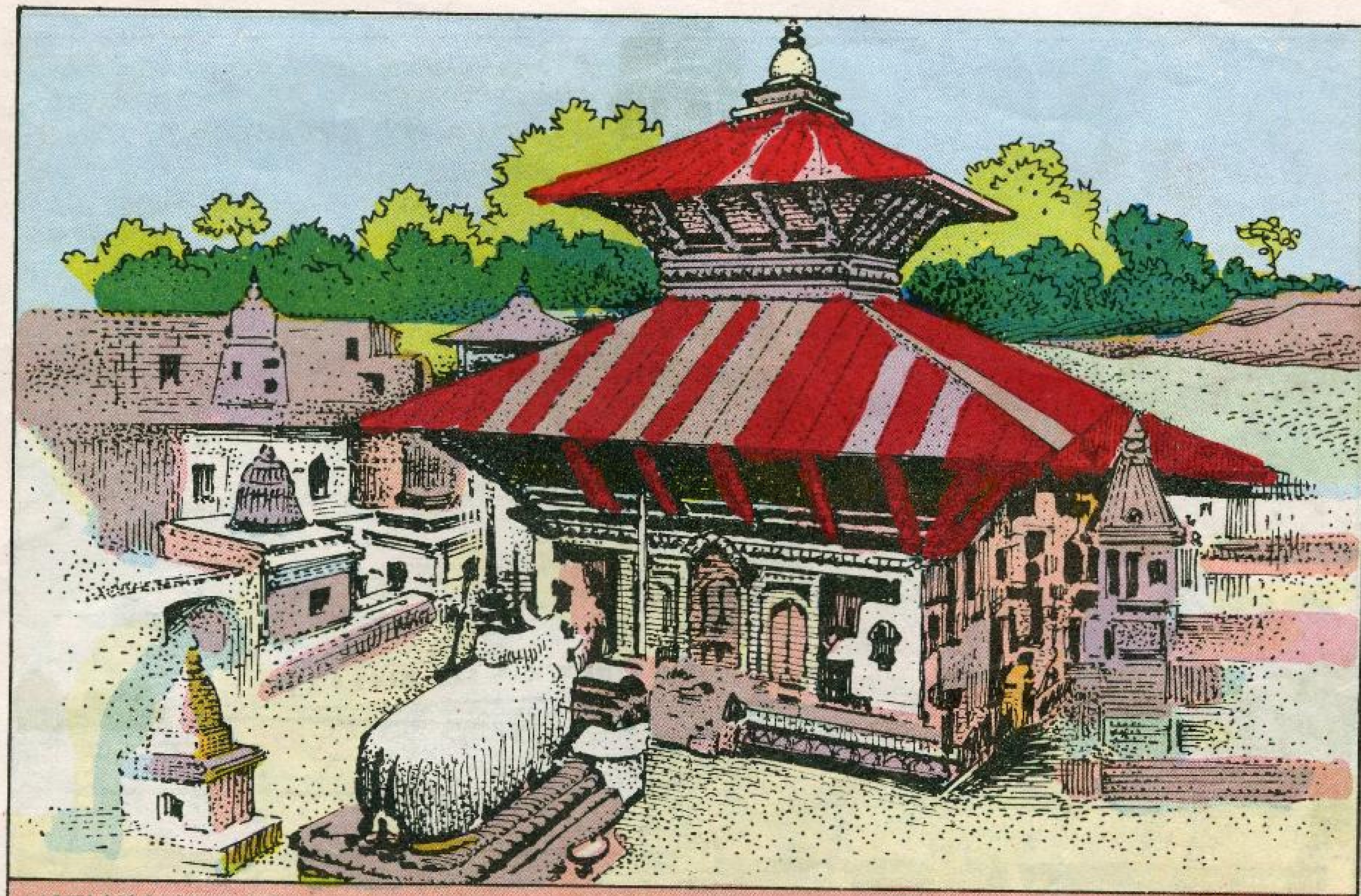
THE HIMALAYAN KINGDOM OF NEPAL HAS SOME OF THE HIGHEST MOUNTAINS IN THE WORLD. THE MIGHTIEST AMONG THEM IS MOUNT EVEREST WHICH THE NEPALESE VENERATE AS THE 'TALLEST GODDESS' IN THE WORLD.



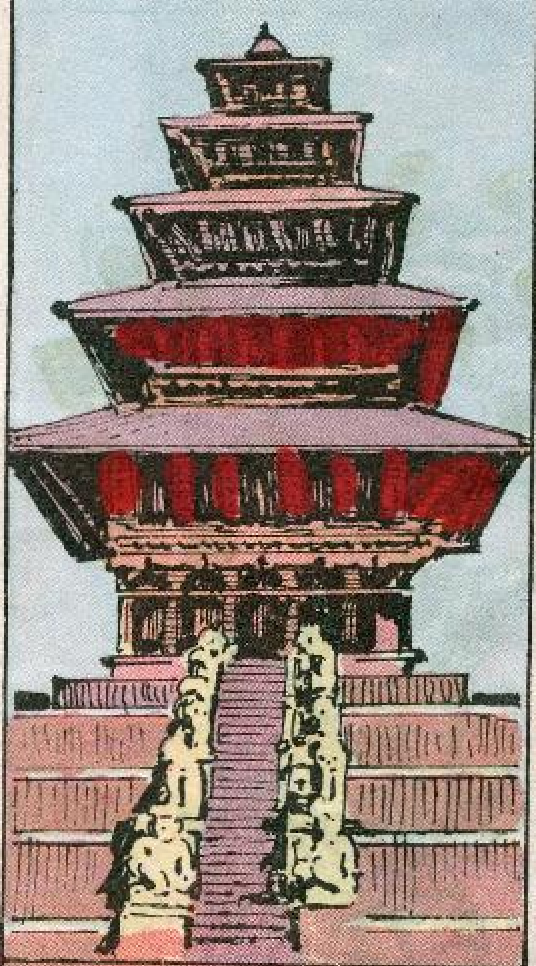


IN THE TEMPERATE FORESTS OF THESE MOUNTAINS, THE RHODODENDRON SHRUBS GROW AS TALL AS TREES—SOMETIMES 15 METRES HIGH ! NO WONDER THE RHODODENDRON IS THE NATIONAL FLOWER OF NEPAL. ALONG THE SOUTHERN BORDER OF NEPAL LIE THE DENSE SWAMPY JUNGLES OF THE TERAI. THIS REGION IS RICH IN WILD LIFE.

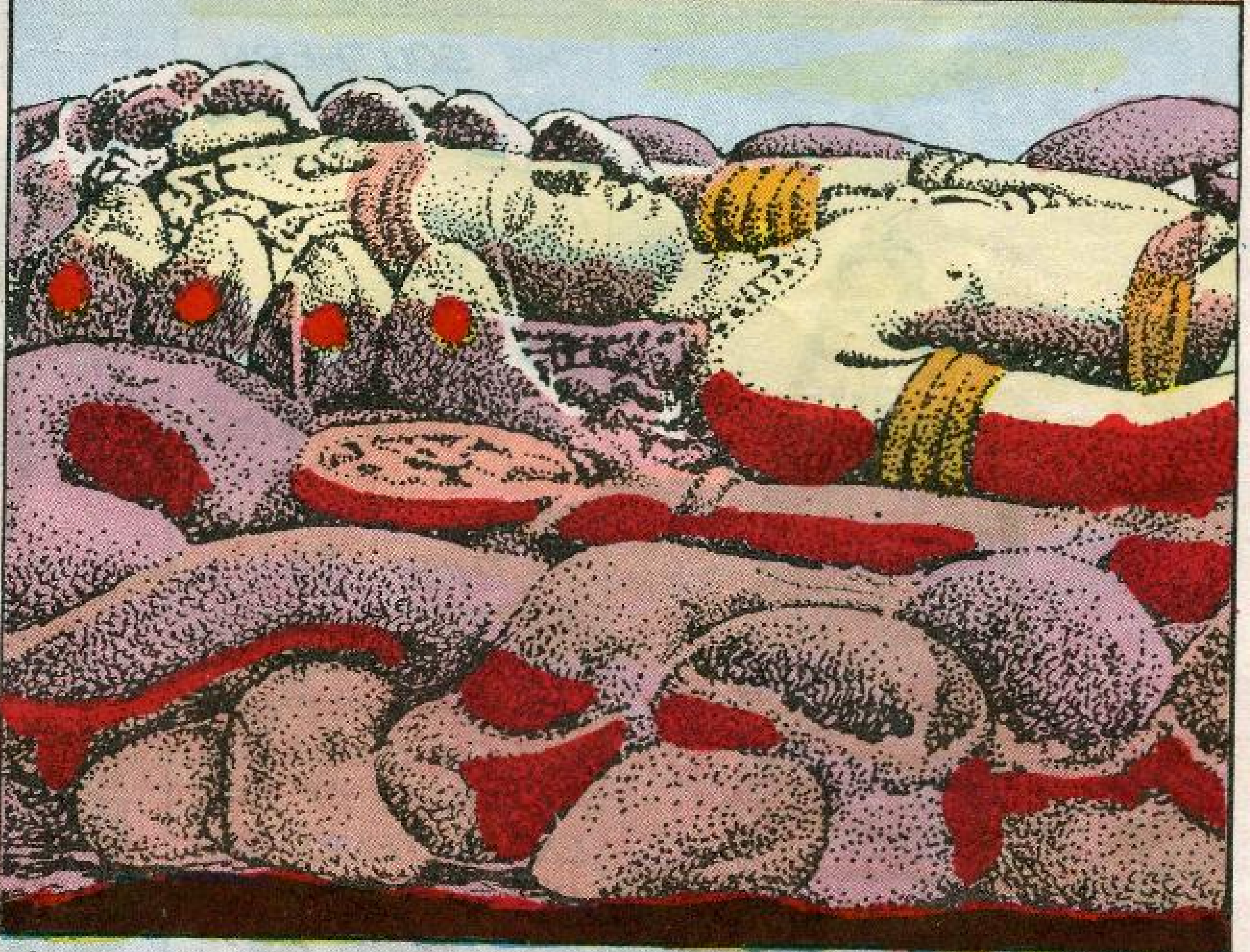

THE HARDY SHERPAS, LIKE THE GURKHAS, ARE WORLD FAMOUS AS GUIDES TO MOUNTAINEERING ENTHUSIASTS.
TENZING NORGAY WHO SCALED MOUNT EVEREST WITH EDMUND HILLARY FOR THE FIRST TIME ON MAY 29, 1953 WAS A SHERPA.
UNTIL THE 18TH CENTURY, NEPAL WAS MADE UP OF A NUMBER OF SMALL PRINCIPALITIES. IT WAS UNITED UNDER ONE RULE BY PRITHVI NARAYAN SHAH WITH HIS GURKHA SOLDIERS.
THE GURKHAS DERIVE THEIR NAME FROM THE TOWN OF GORKHA IN NEPAL. BRAVE AND LOYAL, THEY ARE RESPECTED THE WORLD OVER FOR THEIR VALOUR.
A GURKHA ALWAYS CARRIES THE 'KUKRI' THE TRADITIONAL NEPALESE KNIFE.



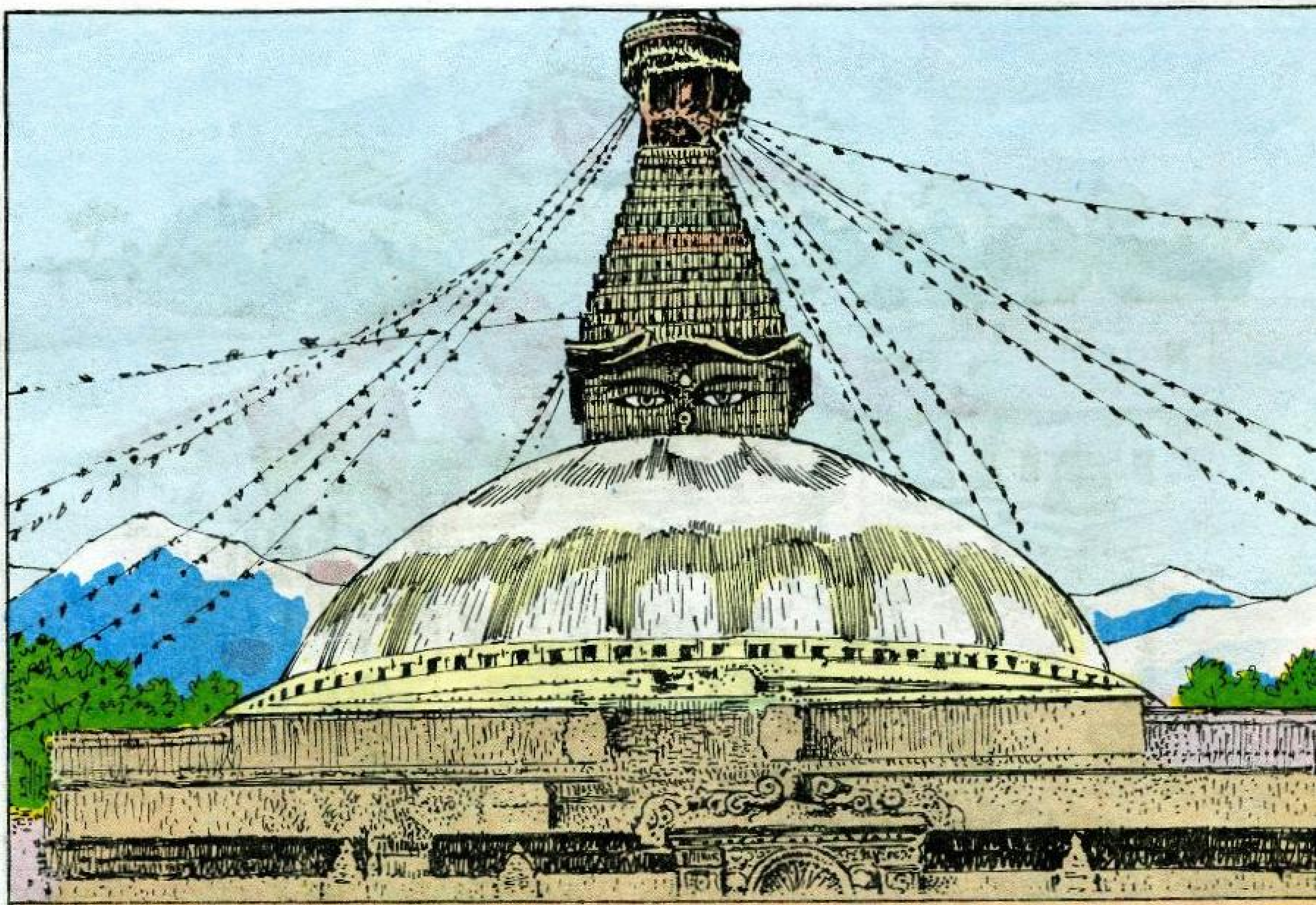
KATHMANDU IS THE CAPITAL OF NEPAL. HERE STANDS THE FAMOUS TEMPLE OF PASHUPATINATH DEDICATED TO SHIVA. ON MAHASHIVARATRI DAY, A LARGE NUMBER OF PILGRIMS VISIT THE SHRINE.



THE PAGODA STYLE OF ARCHITECTURE ORIGINATED IN NEPAL FROM THERE, IT SPREAD TO SOUTH EAST ASIA.



ANOTHER VERY SACRED PLACE FOR THE HINDUS IS NARAYANTHAN. HERE IN THE MIDDLE OF A POND LORD VISHNU RECLINES ON A MANY-HEADED SERPENT. NEPAL IS THE ONLY HINDU KINGDOM IN THE WORLD. THE KINGS ARE REGARDED AS INCARNATIONS OF LORD VISHNU.

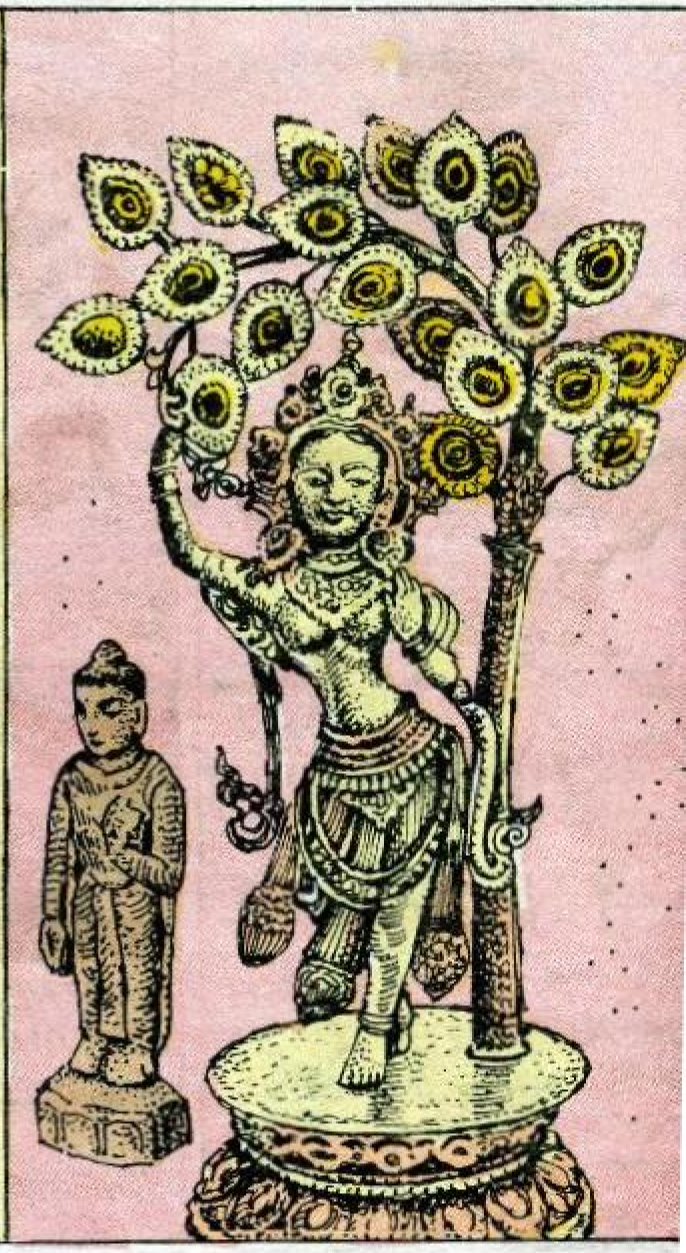


THIS BUDDHIST SHRINE OF SWAYAMBHUNATH IS BELIEVED TO BE MORE THAN 2,000 YEARS OLD. GAUTAMA THE BUDDHA WAS BORN IN



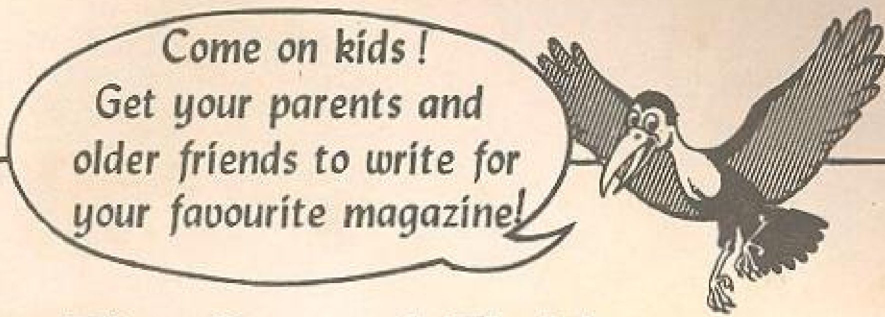
THE SOUTHERN PART OF NEPAL, CLOSE TO THE INDIAN BORDER.

BUDDHISM, THEREFORE, IS AN IMPORTANT RELIGION OF NEPAL. IN THIS TERRACOTTA TEMPLE OF MAHABUDDHA AT PATAN, EVERY BRICK BEARS THE IMAGE OF THE ENLIGHTENED ONE. PATAN, WHICH WAS KNOWN AS LALITPUR IN THE PAST, HAS LONG BEEN FAMOUS FOR ITS CARVINGS IN STONE AND METAL.





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